Northeastern Catholic District School Board

REPORTING ABUSE	
Policy Number: E-26	**Authority: 99-058 /12-174/16-30/19-85/22-49**

POLICY STATEMENT

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, positive and respectful learning environment focused on student well-being. The NCDSB believes that it has a shared responsibility to protect children and youth from abuse and neglect. As such, the NCDSB will serve as a protective partner in the reporting of suspected abuse or neglect in order to help secure the necessary supports for victims and their families.

REFERENCES

Child and Family Services Act, 2017
Education Act
Ontario College of Teachers Professional Advisory – Duty to Report, 2015
Criminal Code of Canada
Ontario Association of Children's Aid Society (website)
Policy Program Memorandum (PPM)
    9 Reporting of Children in Need or Protection
NCDSB Records Retention Schedule
NCDSB Policy
    E-24 Personal Information Management
NCDSB Administrative Procedure
    APE026 Reporting Abuse

DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse
Includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse and/or neglect. It also addresses a pattern of abuse and risks of harm.

Physical Abuse
Any deliberate physical force or action, by a parent or caregiver, which results, or could result, in injury to a child. It can include bruising, cuts, punching, slapping, beating, shaking, burning, biting or throwing a child. Using belts, sticks or other objects to punish a child can cause serious harm and is also considered abuse.

Neglect
Occurs when a caregiver fails to provide basic needs such as adequate food, sleep, safety, education, clothing or medical treatment. It also includes leaving a child alone or failing to provide adequate

supervision. If the caregiver is unable to provide the child with basic needs due to financial inability, it is not considered neglect, unless relief has been offered and refused

Emotional Abuse
A pattern of behaviour that attacks a child's emotional development and sense of self-worth. It includes excessive, aggressive or unreasonable demands that place expectations on a child beyond their capacity. Emotional abuse includes constantly criticizing, teasing, belittling, insulting, rejecting, ignoring or isolating the child. It may also include exposure to domestic violence

Sexual Abuse
Occurs when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or an older child. The child may co-operate because they want to please the adult or out of fear. It includes sexual intercourse, exposing a child's private areas, indecent phone calls, fondling for sexual purposes, watching a child undress for sexual pleasure, and allowing/forcing a child to look at or perform in pornographic pictures or videos, or engage in prostitution.

Reasonable Grounds
Refers to the information that an average person, using unbiased and honest judgement, would need in order to decide to report.

POLICY REGULATIONS

1.0 The NCDSB shall ensure that employees are aware of the definitions of child abuse.

2.0 All NCDSB employees and volunteers will adhere to related acts and responsibilities to report suspected child abuse.

3.0 All employees will be reminded annually of their legal obligations to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

4.0 The dignity and privacy of the child/youth will be respected in all circumstances.

5.0 Employees or volunteers, in the course of performing their professional or official duties, suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must report this information without delay to a children's aid society.

6.0 The duty to report is an ongoing obligation, and every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must make a report directly to a children's aid society and not rely on anyone else to report on their behalf.

7.0 Employees will provide relevant information to an investigation, according to their legal rights and provisions of legislated acts.

8.0 Appropriate documentation shall be maintained by employees who receive a disclosure and those who report suspected child abuse. Notes shall be secured in a secured place and retained permanently, in accordance with personal information management requirements.

9.0 In the event that disclosure is made against an NCDSB employee, the duty to report will be exercised. Under no circumstance shall the implicated staff member be made aware of the allegations or disclosures until specific instructions are received from the investigating agency.

10.0 Upon notice of an allegation of abuse against an employee of the NCDSB, which the Director of Education (or designate) believes is serious, the Director of Education shall remove the employee from direct unsupervised contact with students.

11.0 Administrative procedures will accompany this policy and be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with current regulations and requirements.